



Oakland Voter

League of Women Voters Oakland Area
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2011-2012 Issue 1

September-October 2011



The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education LWVUS Study with Consensus Questions

**Monday, September 12
10:00 am – noon**

**Bloomfield Township Library,
1099 Lone Pine Road, Bloomfield Township**
(Located on Lone Pine Road, just east of Telegraph)
248/642-5800

PANEL DISCUSSION:

Mark Yokum, Director of Learning Services, Oakland Schools Intermediate School District

Geri Rinschler, Trustee, Birmingham School Board, 1996 to the present;
Current Chair of the Oakland County School Board Association.

Lori Soifer, Trustee, Birmingham School Board, 2005 to the present.

If your child moves from one part of the United States to another he will probably encounter substantial variations in graduation requirements. To address this problem, national **Common Core Standards** were developed by the National Governors' Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers in 2010. Forty states have adopted these standards and are aligning them to state standards. These standards are not a federal government mandate, even though acceptance of the standards was a requirement to qualify for "Race to the Top" funding. Now the question is how these standards should relate to national programs.

Leagues across the country are studying common core standards, assessments, and issues of equity and funding in order to develop a position that will be the basis for LWVUS action on the role of the federal government in public education. **Consensus questions are on pages 5-6. Bring them to the meeting.** While we will address each question, consensus is not so much a vote, but rather is the sense of the meeting. As you can see, there are a lot of questions, so we plan to have a second session on Monday, November 14th, to complete the Consensus.

Grace Kachaturoff and Barbara Rosalik are chairing LWVOA's education committee.

To learn more about the Public Education study, go to www.lwv.org and, under "**For Members**", click on **Projects and Programs** to access the study materials for **Public Education**. There you will find the following **Background Papers**:

1. Role of Federal Government in Public Education: Historical Perspectives
2. Common Core Standards and Assessments
3. Funding and Equity Issues
4. Early Childhood Education, Equity and Funding
5. Legislation and Funding for the Education of Children with Special Needs

See Page 3 for details and reservation form for the Fall Luncheon on Monday, October 17th.

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2011-2012

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THE OAKLAND VOTER is the official publication of the League of Women Voters. It is published six times a year by the LWVOA. Articles and Letters to the Editor, with writer's name, address and phone number may be sent to the LWVOA office.
- Editor: Eva Packard

LWVOA ON FACEBOOK!

If you are not already a member of Facebook, you can sign up at www.FACEBOOK.com and make "League of Women Voters Oakland Area" one of your Facebook friends.

Invite your friends to learn about League activities and upcoming programs.

LWV: *Where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In Traverse City at our 2011 LWVMI convention, civility was the theme. I am both proud and relieved to belong to an organization where civility is prized and where we present both candidates and issues in an impartial manner.

In Washington, stubbornness and cynicism seem to be the order of the day. What does it mean to be cynical? My dictionary says to be cynical implies having a sneering disbelief in the sincerity or integrity of other's motives. How often have we heard politicians and media commentators not only disagree with another person's ideas, but also imply that they are liars or have ulterior motives.

League members can set a good example of respectfulness and awareness that people with whom we strongly disagree might well have the best of intentions.

Well, enough of that. Here on the home front I enjoy hearing what League members are doing this summer – planning family reunions, heading up north, taking European river cruises, visiting grandchildren, crossing over to Canada for the Stratford festival, going to concerts.

But as always, some Leaguers are still working away these summer days. Judy Bateman and Ann Edwards organized two candidate forums; Deb Horner and Tera Moon were responsible for our on-line voter guides; Carole Elder is organizing student registration days at two OCC campuses.

Grace Kachaturoff and Barb Rosalik are co-chairs planning our September Education meeting, and Marge Polidori and Dorothy Conrad are planning our Fall Luncheon in October.

Some unsung heroes are Patricia Finn, Mary Howarth, Sue Abrams and Ann Edwards who are cleaning and going through old boxes of League materials stored in our windowless office! That is truly a thankless job.

Mary Ann Barkach, President

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Letter to the Editor:

The *Oakland Press* printed an Editorial titled "Congressional remap should go to court" pointing out that the four snake-like districts that wind through the tri-county area do not meet the redistricting criteria of compactness. President Mary Ann Barkach sent a letter to the Editor supporting that view and noting that the time has come to rethink and reform the redistricting procedure before the next census. If you see her letter in the paper, please let her know at pres@lwvoa.org.

LWVOA ANNUAL FALL LUNCHEON

Presents

“HUMAN TRAFFICKING”

a worldwide problem, including in the United States

MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2011

12 noon Lunch
1 pm Speaker

First Baptist Church of Birmingham
300 Willits, Birmingham, MI 48009
(North of Maple, West of Old Woodward)
Enter the Church via the BACK Door,

Speaker:

NICOLE McGEE

Special Victims Agent

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Human trafficking is the illegal trade of human beings for the purposes of reproductive slavery, commercial sexual exploitation, forced labor, or a modern-day form of slavery.

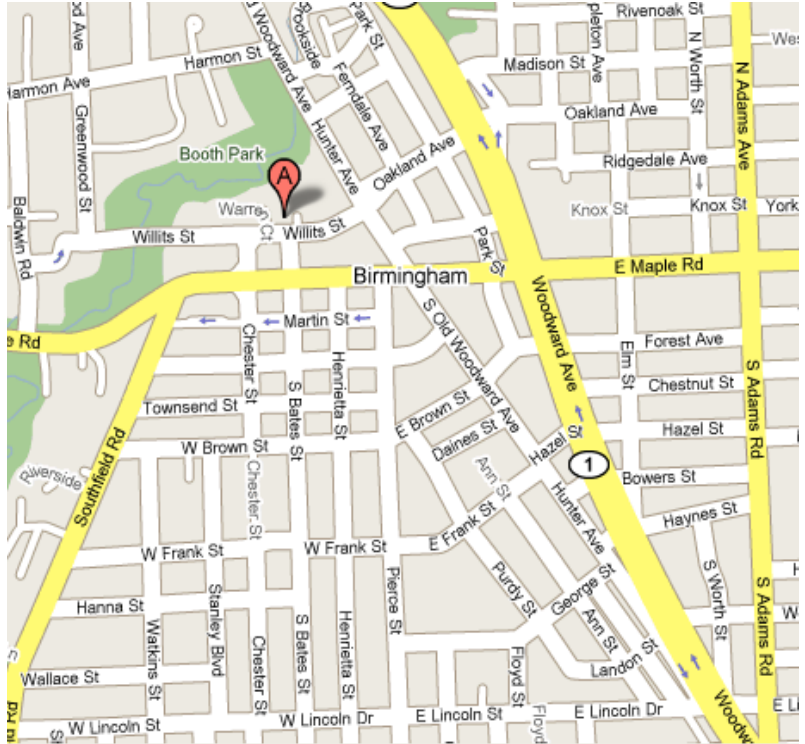
Open to the public.

Please come and bring your friends and support our programs and fundraising activities such as these.

\$25 Lunch & Speakers

- delicious lunch, beverages & dessert
provided by Dorothy Conrad & Marge Polidori

\$7 for Speakers only



Parking (1st 2 hours free) at adjacent Garage.

Enter lot at Bates and Willits

Handicapped Parking in the lot is directly behind church.

RESERVATION FORM for OCTOBER 17, 2011, FALL LUNCHEON

Fill out this form and mail with check payable to LWVOA to:

Marge Polidori

30525 Timberbrook Ln.

Bingham Farms, MI 48025-4660

NAME(s) _____

Address: _____

Phone _____

No. for Lunch (@\$25) _____ for Speaker Only (@\$7) _____ \$ _____ Enclosed

Choice of Panera Bread Sandwich: (Indicate number of each if reserving for more than 1.)

Mediterranean Veggie _____ Smoked ham & Swiss _____

Sierra Turkey _____ Roast Beef _____ Tuna Salad _____

See <http://www.panerabread.com/menu/cafe/sandwiches.php> for detail on sandwiches.

RESERVATION NECESSARY BY OCT. 13th

VOTER SERVICE FOR Fall 2011 Village, City & School ELECTIONS



VOTER GUIDES for the **September 13th Village elections** are **posted on our website www.LWVOA.org**. **Bingham Farms and Franklin have contests**; Lake Orion and Oxford are uncontested so only candidate names are listed. Thanks to **Deb Horner** for preparing the guides with the help of Ann Edwards to proof and Tera Moon to post online. Voter Guides for the **November 8th General election** should all be **posted by October 1**.

On **November 8th** in Oakland Area, 28 cities and 20 school districts will have elections. **Cities with contested elections** are: Auburn Hills, Birmingham, Clawson, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Keego Harbor, Lathrup Village, Madison Hts, Northville, Novi, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Rochester, Rochester Hills, Royal Oak, South Lyon, Southfield, and Sylvan Lake. **School districts with contested elections** are: Avondale, Berkley, Birmingham, Clarenceville, Farmington, Huron Valley, Madison, Novi, Oxford, Rochester, and West Bloomfield. See www.lwvtroyarea.org for city of Troy and Troy schools info.

Candidate lists and Proposals for the elections are available online at the County Clerk's website www.oakgov.com/clerkrod/elections.

CANDIDATE FORUMS have been arranged as of this writing for the cities of Southfield (9/14), Clawson (9/19), KeegoHarbor+SylvanLake (9/21), Pleasant Ridge (9/22), Rochester Hills (9/29), Ferndale (10/3), Farmington Hills (10/4), Rochester (10/6) and Birmingham (10/12). **See Calendar of Events on page 8 for details**. Judy Bateman and Jerry Burden are working on additional city/school forums. As they are arranged, they will be posted in the **Candidate Forum calendar on www.LWVOA.org**. Forums will be recorded for rebroadcast on local cable with some also available online on-demand. Check with your local cable organization for rerun information.

UPCOMING LWVMI EVENTS: (Details and registration info will be posted at www.lwvmi.org.)

Convenient Voting Action Day on Wednesday, Oct. 12 (9:30 am-4 pm) in Lansing.

Training and Legislative Advocacy on "no-reason absentee voting".

Regional Workshop on Tapping the Power: VOTER SERVICE and the NEW MEDIA on Saturday, Nov. 19 (10 am-3 pm) at the Livonia Library.

Lunch included in events. Registration required.

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Ofc: 248-874-1832
Fax: 248-874-1855

E-mail: ecrain@mea.org

Eduarda Crain
Executive Director

www.mea.org

LWVUS Education Study - The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education

Consensus Questions

General Questions

1. **The current role of the federal government in public education is**
Much too small Too small About right Too large Much too large
2. **What should be the role of the federal government in public education? (RANK)**
 - a. To ensure that all students preK-12 receive a quality education.
 - b. To develop accountability measures that will study the progress of all students so that they achieve adequate yearly progress.
 - c. To mandate Common Core Standards for all students K-12.
 - d. To monitor state efforts for funding
 - e. To measure teacher effectiveness through test data.
3. **A quality public education is important to perpetuate a strong and viable democracy.**
Strongly agree Agree No consensus Disagree Strongly disagree

Common Core Standards

4. **Currently the governors and state education officers have developed Common Core Standards that are national but not federal. Should the standards be mandated of the states in order to obtain federal funding? (CHOOSE ONE)**
 - a. Special grant programs such as Race to the Top
 - b. All programs under Elementary and Secondary Education Act where the needs qualify for funding.
 - c. All programs receiving federal funding from any source
 - d. All of the above
 - e. None of the above
5. **Should there be a national assessment aligned with the common cores standards?**
Yes No

If Yes, Should implementation be voluntary or federally mandated? **(CHOOSE ONE)**

- a. Voluntary
- b. Mandated
- c. Mandated, if fully funded

If No, what other accountability measures might you suggest? **(CHOOSE ONE)**

- a. Continue to allow the states to develop their own assessments.
- b. Suggest that the local education districts use their own assessments or adopt one that is a nationally norm-referenced assessment, such as the *Stanford Achievement Test* or *Iowa Test of Basic Skills*.
- c. Suggest that districts use a portfolio type of assessment where student projects and activities would be scored holistically

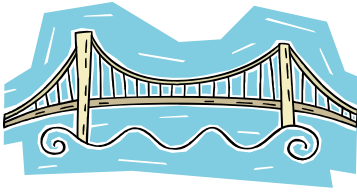
6. **National standards should lead to: (CHOOSE ONE)**
 - a. A nationally mandated curriculum to be aligned to the national standards and assessments.
 - b. A national curriculum that is only suggested but not mandated.
 - c. A suggested structure for states and local education agencies to develop their own curriculum.
 - d. No national curriculum.
7. **What role should the national assessment consortia play in student evaluation? (RANK ORDER)**
 - a. Provide an assessment system that is aligned to the Common Core Standards.
 - b. Provide comparison data showing progress toward reaching Common Core Standards.
 - c. Provide criteria for determining readiness for college and careers.
 - d. Provide information to students, parents, teachers and school districts about student achievement.
 - e. Provide diagnostic information on each child.

8. **Data from the national assessments are often difficult for parents, teachers and others to understand. If we have a national assessment, what information is most important to be reported to parents, teachers, students and the community? (CHOOSE ONE)**
- Data should be "norm referenced" (where students are ranked) for district comparison only.
 - Data should be "criterion referenced" and clearly informative so that teachers, parents, and students know how individual students have mastered criteria established at a national level.
 - Data should be used to determine "cut" scores knowing if students have mastered requirements for special grade levels.
9. **Information from nationally required assessment data should be used to (CHOOSE ONE):**
- Sanction schools not measuring up to the specific levels
 - Reward schools that achieve high scores
 - Rank teachers based on student test score data
 - Reward teachers who have exemplary scores
 - Inform districts how their population compares to others similar to theirs.

Funding and Equity

10. **In the past most of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding has been non-competitive based on need. All/Any Schools that prove they fall under the federal guidelines for funding receive those funds. However, competitive grants are now being proposed to states/districts who meet certain federal requirements, such as Race to the Top. Which would be appropriate: (CHOOSE ONE)**
- Non-competitive funding for all applicants meeting requirements
 - A combination of non-competitive and competitive grants
 - Competitive grants only
 - No federal funding
11. **If the federal government's role is the concern of the "common good" then: (CHOOSE ONE)**
- Mandates only should be sanctioned.
 - Mandates and funding should both be provided.
 - Funding should be provided through grants only.
 - A combination of funded mandates and grants should apply.
 - No mandates should be required and limited grants for innovation available.
12. **Equity in public education means equitable access to: (RANK ORDER)**
- high quality teaching/learning
 - adequate and current learning materials
 - clean and well maintained physical facilities
 - food and health care
 - safe and secure neighborhoods
 - secure housing
13. **Currently Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding is considered "categorical" rather than for general use. This means that it can only be used with special populations for special purposes. ESEA should remain targeted toward poverty and special needs.**
Strongly agree Agree No consensus Disagree Strongly disagree
14. **The federal government has a role in supporting early childhood education, birth to 5, for all children?**
Strongly agree Agree No consensus Disagree Strongly disagree
15. **Federal support for early childhood education programs (e.g.Head Start, Title I, Special Education, Early Start) should include funding for parent education and support regarding child development, child health and nutrition, and access to other supportive services, such as mental health as needed.**
- Strongly Agree Agree No consensus Disagree Strongly Disagree*
 - This funding should be extended to:
All children Only those with special needs Special needs first

LWV Detroit Metro Area hosts speakers on proposed New International Trade Crossing



On June 25th, the League of Women Voters Detroit Metropolitan Area, an Inter-League Organization for the tri-county area, held its Annual Meeting at Fortesa Restaurant in Rochester. Delegates approved the proposed budget for 2011-2012 and re-adopted DMA positions on Transportation, Housing, and Waste Treatment / River Basins. Officers elected were: President Mary Bugeia, 1st Vice-president Eboni LaMar, Secretary Barbara Suhay, and Directors Fran Schonenberg and Karen DeGrendel. Elected to the Nominating Committee were Mary Ann Barkach as Chair and Barbara Adams as a member.

After a delicious lunch, President Mary Bugeia introduced the speakers on the New International Trade Crossing (NITC):
- **Mickey Blashfield, Director, Governmental Affairs for the Ambassador Bridge, who spoke against NITC**
- **Tom Shields, President, Marketing Resource Group, who spoke in favor of NITC.**

Blashfield spoke in favor of building an additional span at the privately-owned (by Matty Maroun) Ambassador Bridge which requires no action by the legislature and no cost to taxpayers. He said traffic went down from 1999 to 2009 as auto plants were closed and, therefore, the new bridge further downriver is not needed. It would take business from the existing bridge. Custom booths have doubled at the current bridge and pre-screening is used to reduce backups. He said costs incurred by Ambassador Bridge to twin its span would also qualify for government matching funds for roads. He noted that the I-75 Gateway Project just completed was designed to handle a second span at Ambassador Bridge and pointed out that the NITC location is over salt mines.

Shields represented the broad coalition of businesses big and small from all over the state that support NITC. He noted that all past and present Governors, Brooks Patterson, Wayne County, Detroit and labor unions support NITC. Canada is the US's #1 trade partner both ways, representing 49% of U.S. exports and 7 million jobs, including 237,000 in Michigan. 1/3 of that traffic goes over the Ambassador Bridge. Tie-ups due to the 7 miles and 18 traffic lights to Canadian highway 401 cost US businesses millions. Michigan agriculture is a big and growing exporter to Canada. Truck traffic is projected to double by 2035 plus post-9/11 security takes more time. The Ambassador Bridge has no approvals on either side of the border. Canada has been adamant that they cannot handle any more traffic at the current location in Windsor.

Regarding funding, Canada has offered \$550 million for Michigan's costs for its share of the roadwork and new plaza to be built and has committed to pick up any overruns if needed. Legislation is needed not for funding, but to create an authority to work with Canada. The bridge itself will be bid out to a private developer to build, operate and maintain. NITC will bring 10,000 jobs for Michigan and 20,000 for Canada. The \$550 million leverages \$2.2 billion in US road funds and will help jumpstart the economy. A second bridge separate from the existing one is needed for security and safety reasons and will provide freeway-to-freeway access and expandable plazas. By comparison to Detroit, Buffalo has 4 bridges and 14 lanes vs. our one bridge. Truck traffic cannot use the tunnel.

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DUES NOTE:

Our new League year began July 1st, which means DUES are due for the 2011-2102 League year. **Dues remain at \$60.** If you have not yet paid your dues for this League year, go to www.LWVOA.org and click on JOIN THE LEAGUE to print a membership form to use for mailing a check payable to LWVOA at our office or to utilize PayPal to pay your dues online.



League of Women Voters® Oakland Area

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A Voice for Change

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Time Dated Material Enclosed

Calendar of Events

- Thu. Sept 1 7 pm LWVOA Board meeting @ LWVOA office, 725 S. Adams Rd, Birmingham 48009
- Mon. Sept 12 10 am **GENERAL MEETING – Role of the Federal Government in Public Education**
@Bloomfield Township Library, 1099 Lone Pine Rd (@Telegraph Rd) (See Pages 1,5,6.)
- For elections, see Voter Guides and Candidate Forums on www.LWVOA.org for current list. (See Page 4.)*
- Tue. Sept 13 7am-8pm **VILLAGE ELECTIONS** (Bingham Farms, Franklin, Lake Orion, Oxford)
- Wed. Sept 14 7 pm **Candidate Forum for Southfield City Council**
@ Southfield Public Library, 26300 Evergreen Rd, Southfield 48076
- Mon. Sept 19 7 pm **Candidate Forum for Clawson City Council**
@Clawson City Hall, 450 N. Main, Clawson 48017
- Wed. Sept 21 7 & 7:45 pm **Candidate Forums for Keego Harbor & Sylvan Lake City Councils**
@ Sylvan Lake Community Center, 2456 Pontiac Dr, Sylvan Lake 48320
- Thu. Sept 22 7 pm **Candidate Forum for Pleasant Ridge City Commission**
@ Pleasant Ridge Community Center, 4 Ridge Rd, Pleasant Ridge 48069
- Thu. Sept 29 7 & 8:30 pm **Candidate Forums for Rochester Hills City Council and Mayor**
@ Rochester Hills City Hall, 1000 Rochester Hills Dr, Rochester Hills, 48309
- Mon. Oct 3 7 pm **Candidate Forum for Ferndale Mayor and City Council**
@ Ferndale City Hall, 300 E. 9 Mile Rd, Ferndale 48220
- Tue. Oct 4 7 pm **Candidate Forum for Farmington Hills City Council by COHA w. LWVOA**
@ Farmington Hills City Hall, 31555 11 Mile Rd (@Orchard Lk) FarmingtonHills 48336
- Thu. Oct 6 7:30 pm **Candidate Forum for Rochester City Council**
@ Rochester City Hall, 400 Sixth St., Rochester 48307
- Wed. Oct 12 6:30 & 7:15 **Candidate Forums for Birmingham Library Board & City Commission**
@Baldwin Library, 330 W. Merrill, Birmingham 48009
- Wed. Oct. 12 9:30am-4pm **Convenient Voting ACTION DAY, Lansing.** Registration required. (See Page 4)
- Mon. Oct 17 12 noon **FALL LUNCHEON** at First Baptist Church of Birmingham, 300 Willits
“Human Trafficking”, a worldwide problem including in the United States
\$25 for Lunch+Speakers, \$7 Speakers only. Reserve by 10/13. (See Page 3.)
- Tue. Nov 8 7am-8pm **CITY & SCHOOL Board General ELECTIONS** (28 cities, 20 school districts)
- Mon. Nov 14 10 am **GENERAL MEETING** to continue Consensus on LWVUS Education Study